

# What's Happening?

A NEWSLETTER

FOR THE MAINE MEDICAL CENTER FAMILY

## *Ethics at the Center*

### Is employee information always confidential?

MMC holds monthly Clinical Ethics Discussions to help employees resolve the many ethical challenges we face at work. Recently, a group examined a case study based on calls to the Ethics Helpline.

#### **The Situation**

A child of an MMC employee with a direct patient care role is being treated at the hospital. During treatment the child reveals that the parent regularly uses an illegal substance. The parent confirms this but does not feel it has an impact on his or her job performance.

#### **The Ethical Challenge**

The treating department calls the Ethics Helpline to ask whether the information should be reported to HR or the employee's manager. The concern is that the employee's behavior might affect judgement or performance and compromise patient care.

ETHICS, SEE P.2



The new kiosks in the main corridor (above) and the Dana Center are very popular with staff and visitors. Taking care of business are: Tom Beane, left, Kay Pellecchia, and Michael Cirillo. AV Photo.

## *MMC Y2K*

### *Contingency Planning Clinical Engineering*

MMC's Clinical Engineering Department began identifying and inventorying all medical equipment that might be susceptible to the Y2K "glitch" nearly two years ago. A conservative approach was used, checking and double-checking equipment, fixing, upgrading, remediating or replacing equipment as necessary, and working hand-in-hand with vendors for remediating medical equipment. The department has evaluated more than 2,271 different models from over 10,000 medical equipment devices representing more than 1,000 different manufacturers used at MMC. Paul Labbe, Director of Clinical Engineering, says the department expects no medical equipment to malfunction as a result of the Y2K problem.

All monitoring equipment, ventilators, defibrillators, and imaging equipment (x-ray, MRI, CT scanners) have been checked and problems remediated. There are about 30 devices, institution-wide, that will require a manual reset of the date by users or Clinical Engineering staff. Labbe reports that members of his staff will meet with

Y2K PLANNING, SEE P.2





## Free Prostate Cancer Screening *for men aged 50 and over*

- Free prostate exam by a local urologist
- Free PSA test • Free educational information

0900--1300 hours, Saturday, November 13  
Brighton Surgical Center, MMC Brighton Campus  
*For more information, please call 879-8030.*

ETHICS, FROM P. 1

### Discussion

Before being told the outcome of the case study, the group discussed the situation's implications. Did the treating department have any evidence the employee was under the influence of drugs while at work? No. (Reporting to work at MMC while under the influence of drugs or alcohol is grounds for termination.) Was there any indication of child abuse? No. (If child abuse is suspected it must be reported to Child Protective Services and to MMC's Department of Social Work.) How old was the child? The child was a teenager. Some felt the obligation to report would be greater if the child was a baby instead of a teenager or young adult. If the parent were a police officer or an employee at a different hospital, would the treating department report the information to the parent's place of work? No.

### Outcome

The Ethics Helpline advised the treating department **not** to report the information. Instead, the treatment team should follow-up on the parent's substance use as part of the treatment process. The overriding concern in this case study was patient confidentiality. Because the information was revealed while treating a patient, the informa-

tion is confidential and cannot be reported. The only exception would be a situation involving a legal requirement to report or clear evidence that patient or employee safety is at risk.

In summarizing the case, it was emphasized that situations like this are common at MMC and concerned employees often can approach the situation from several legitimate roles (case worker, co-worker, friend, manager, patient advocate, etc.). It is important to determine what your rights and responsibilities within your defined role are before you proceed (for example, a friend's role will be different than a manager's.)

If you are confronted with an ethical challenge you don't know how to resolve, you have a number of options:

- ? Talk to your supervisor.
- ? Talk to a higher-level manager in your department.
- ? Talk to someone in another department such as Human Resources, Legal Affairs, Audit & Compliance Services, or Risk Management.

? Or call the Ethics Helpline, 871-4646.

The next Clinical Ethics Discussions will be held November 10 and December 8. For more information on the discussion series, call 871-4491.

Y2K PLANNING, FROM P. 1

"equipment-rich" departments over the next several weeks to share with them procedures on how to do any date resets that may be necessary. The need for such resets does not effect proper operation of the equipment, only correct tracking of the date. Examples of equipment-rich departments include SCU, Radiology, Cardiac Catheterization Lab, and the OR.

While not anticipating any surprises New Year's Eve, Clinical Engineering staff will be on-site that night, touring these equipment-rich areas. They will also be available for questions and to assist with any problems that should occur.

Paul Labbe or Gary Harmon would welcome any questions you might have. Please feel free to contact either of them at 871-2815 or by email at labbep or harmog. You are invited to send Y2K-related questions via interoffice mail to Martha Davoli, Public Information Manager, or email them to davolm. Questions and their answers will be printed in a future edition of *What's Happening*.

### *Flu Vaccine for MMC Employees, Retirees, Volunteers*

Call Employee Health to  
make an appointment,  
871-4011,  
weekdays, 0730-1600 hours.  
7 Bramhall Street  
(across from Dana Center)  
Check in with blue card.  
Units interested in  
"self-administration",  
call Donna Ross, 871-4011



# Caring

## TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE

*What's Caring To Make A Difference all about? It's about people who make MMC special. It's about the folks who are quietly working hard each day to improve themselves, improve their departments, and improve the quality of life at MMC for everyone who enters our doors.*

### Environment of Care Program is One of the Country's Best!

Maine Medical Center has one of the best EOC programs in the country, according to our JCAHO surveyors. JCAHO defines **environment of care** as any place where the combination of people, equipment, and buildings is present. An important part of maintaining a safe environment is being sure that all employees participate in Environment of Care (EOC) training, formal safety training on an annual basis.

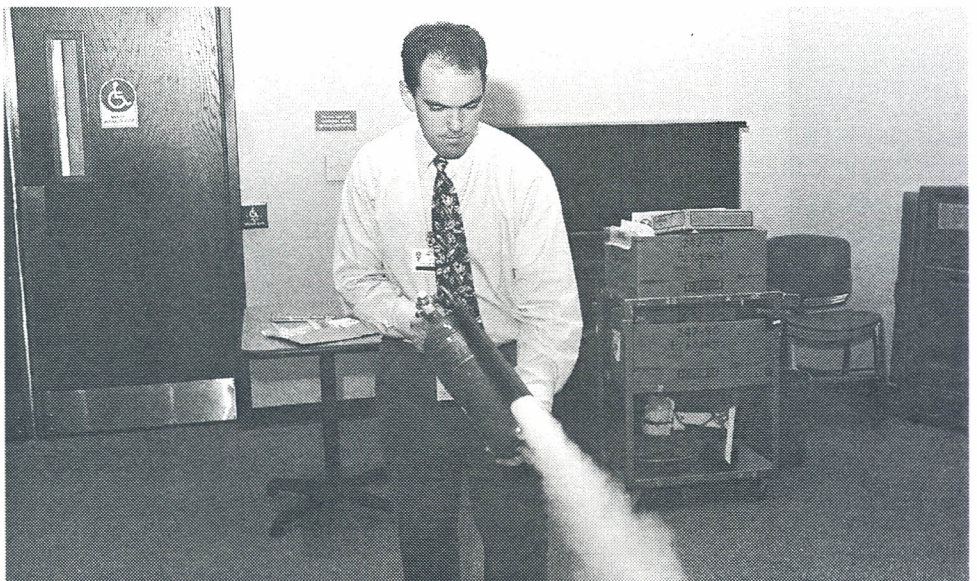
Over the past several years, Jeff Sanborn, MMC's Safety Manager, has worked with Nursing Resources and the Environment of Care Committee (Dave Young, Security; Nancy Young, Infection Control; Paul Labbe, Clinical Engineering; and Roger Boyington, Engineering), along with other departments. They had three goals in mind to design and deliver an EOC review program that is: relevant to the individual worker, cost effective, and provided in a customer-friendly way. It also needed to cover the major topics of safety, security, hazardous materials and

wastes, emergency preparedness, life safety, medical equipment, utility systems and social environment. Impossible you say? Not for this team! It was an ambitious challenge and one that Jeff and his team members took very seriously. In the spirit of 'continuous improvement', the program design evolved over several years in an attempt to meet the needs of a changing

workplace and new JCAHO requirements.

At one time, all employees were required to attend an hour-long session to review fire safety and safety information with 'live demonstrations' in the Dana Auditorium. These live demonstrations are now part of the EOC 'new employee' orientation taught by the staffs of MMC Safety, Infection Control, and Security. Here employees have the opportunity to handle fire extinguishers, see asbestos, and learn about the dangers of gas cylinders and magnetic fields. This orientation provides the employee with a strong base on which to build the yearly EOC reviews.

It was recognized that it was



Assistant Safety Manager Ken Crombie demonstrates how to properly use a fire extinguisher at a recent orientation. AV Photo.



becoming increasingly more difficult for employees to leave their work assignments. In order to provide a 'self-paced' format with more flexibility for off-shift workers, Nursing Resources and the Safety Department collaborated to design a drop-in center where staff could have a hands-on learning experience. This was seen as an improvement by employees but still required staff to leave their departments. Also, the compliance rate for mandatory education was not as high as it needed to be. So...back to the drawing board.

Hard work and creativity on the part of many people has resulted in what we now know as the Competency-Based Yearly EOC Review. 'Competency-based' means that employees take a comprehensive test and, depending on right and wrong answers, they are referred to specific sections of the **Environment Of Care Institutional Policy Manual, Vol. 2**, to review any areas that need to be studied. "This puts the responsibility for learning the material right into the hands of the individual employee," says Jeff. He knows staff are doing their homework because he receives calls directly when there is a specific question about a policy. Also, the compliance rate hospital-wide increased from 60% a few years ago to 82% in 1998. Jeff and Debbie Kinney, RN, Staff Development, are shooting for greater than 95% for 1999/2000!

Even though they have a great product now, this team will continue to fine tune it so it continues to meet the changes our environment demands. Currently a manager's version of the competency-based test is being developed to address the special level of policy knowledge

that managers and department heads need. Also, by next year they hope to have the test 'on line' so results and record-keeping can be done in a paperless format.

A last thought: after passing the

EOC test, take the lesson one step further to explore your department's and your own role in supporting a safe, secure **Environment of Care** in which to take care of ourselves and our patients.

## Groups Brainstorm Better

Employees can have great ideas for improving customer service but it can be a challenge to keep the interest up when the day-to-day workload keeps everyone hopping. To keep employee ideas flowing, a small company in the Midwest came up with a 'team-based idea of the month contest'.

The company CEO assigns a topic for the month that has a direct impact on customer satisfaction for their particular client base. Ideas generated each month are posted. Employees place a silver star next to the idea they think has the most potential. A gold star is added when the idea is implemented, which happens about 95% of the time! The person or team that generated the idea is treated to a complementary lunch or free movie passes.

Group brainstorming helps keep team spirit strong. By demonstrating that suggestions are taken seriously and acted upon when possible, employees who are closest to the issues will get involved in improving the workplace for patients, families and themselves!

*Source: 301 Great Customer Service Ideas, Nancy Artz*

## Hear the Voice of the Customer

From time to time we like to publish some of the verbatim comments that we receive on our inpatient satisfaction survey. Here are some answers to two of those questions:

Q. Would you return/not return to this hospital?

A. I would return because I am very confident in my doctor and because the hospital nursing and surgical staff were superb. Every single one of them made me feel that I was their only patient. They were all sincerely empathetic and completely understood what I was feeling and experiencing. Please thank them all.

A. I was very sick and ran into a lot of problems. If I had not been at Maine Medical, I probably would not have come out alive.

A. Having been a patient at BMC before the merger, I was skeptical about such a large hospital, but I was pleasantly surprised by the quality of care I received.

Q. Did you have a good surprise?

A. Yes. My room was extraordinary and the medical staff were delightful.

A. During my first post op night, my pain escalated, requiring lots of pain medication. I was upset, crying at times, and in pain. A young nurses' aide was very helpful in trying to make me feel better. She surprised me by saying, "You look like you could use a hug". Then she hugged me! It was very thoughtful of her.

*Caring To Make A Difference is a monthly publication of the Continuous Productivity and Quality Improvement Office. Ideas, questions, and comments may be directed to Cindy Bridgham, CPQI Office, at 871-2009, Fax 871-6286.*



## MMC's Vocational Services staff can help you 'Think Ability'

Every day, as healthcare professionals, we see and treat individuals who -- because of an illness, injury, or accident -- may not be able to return to their job.

Statistics tell us one in four adults will be disabled. One in five adults suffers from a mental health disorder in any given year. 95% of working Americans say, if disabled, they would want to return to work if they were able. Working Americans say they most likely would return to work after a disability leave because they liked to work (62%), they need the paycheck (54%), or they like their jobs (51%).

Sadly, if and when they rejoin the workforce is often not a matter of ability or desire, but whether an employer will hire those who are differently abled. Just as physical barriers - lack of a ramp or close captioning - must be overcome, societal barriers must be removed as well.

Vocational or "Return to Work" programs are an ideal, cost-effective way of encouraging those who become disabled to

join or return to the workforce.

The Department of Vocational Services at Maine Medical Center (DVS) is a statewide leader in the development and implementation of vocational services for people with disabilities. DVS reaches out to youth in schools and people receiving services in local communities. Core services are education, training, support services, and a peer network to serve businesses and provide resources to recruit, hire, train and support new and current employees with disabilities.

### Workforce 2000

- America's labor shortage will continue.
- Maine's unemployment rate is less than the national 4% average.
- The service and retail trade industries will continue to provide most job opportunities.
- Of the 17 million disabled of working age (16-64), 29% are in the workforce working full- or part-time.
- The average cost of accommodations is only \$400.

• An estimated 200 million workdays are lost every year due to depression.

Employing people with disability is, of course, good for America. This is a "win - win - win" strategy. Employers win because they have better, more productive employees. Less obvious to many, but just as valuable, is the creativity and perspective differently-abled people bring to work. So often the qualities we as employers seek most in the workplace - ability to prioritize, focus, and set goals - are ones people with disabilities exercise to meet daily challenges. The person with the disability wins because he or she becomes a contributing member of society with greater purchasing power, leading to a greater sense of identity, confidence, and self-esteem. And the community wins because the economy is made stronger when all segments of the population are included in the workforce and in the customer base, with fewer people on government welfare rolls.

For more information on employing the disabled or for "Disability Awareness" training for your staff, contact the Department of Vocational Services, 871-2088.

### *Maine Medical Center's Employee Assistance Program*

**It's there for you.**

For a confidential appointment, call 761-8345.  
930 Congress Street, 3rd floor  
(Located at corner of Congress and Gilman Streets,  
across from Employee Garage.)

### **MENTORING: Touching the Future**

**Become one of MMC's mentors to a Portland High School student.  
To learn more, contact Elisa Chadwick at 871-2088 or e-mail  
[chadwe@mail.mmc.org](mailto:chadwe@mail.mmc.org).**

### *Thank you*

Thank you to all for participating in our Jeopardy game during Infection Control Week.

Congratulations to the winners of our door prizes!

Sheila Millington, RD, Nutrition Services, won the video "A Bug's Life". Pamela Gerrish, Medical Records, won the first aid kit.

*Infection Control Staff*



# Welcome to the electronic world of library resources!

Maine Medical Center's Library has recently acquired many new and some old electronic versions of library resources.

**Library Roundtables\***, database access to Medline, Cinahl, Bioethicsline, Cancerlit, Health Star, and PsychInfo, is now available in a web version. A new addition to this collection is the **PsychInfo** database. All databases can be searched at <http://webspirs4.silverplatter.com:8500/c25708?>. If you have NT, simply call the HelpDesk and have the global Library Roundtables icon added to your profile.

**MERLIN\*** is the Library's card catalog. Now available on the Web at <http://web.mmc.org/webopac>, MERLIN can tell you what books, journals, and audiovisuals the Library owns.

**The Cochrane Library\*** at <http://www.updateusa.com/clibip/clib.htm> provides full text medical evidence-based information articles.

Also available are:

**The PDR** (Physicians' Desk Reference), **the PDR for Herbal Medicine**, and **Stedman's Medical Dictionary**. All of these are accessible at <http://www.pdrel.com>.

All of these items can be linked to from the **MMC Intranet Page** ([home.mmc.org](http://home.mmc.org)). Just click on Search and then Library Resources, or visit the Library page on the Intranet under Departments.

You can also call the Library (871-2202) or email us (**LIBRARY**) for answers to your questions, information on how to use these resources, or training opportunities on any Library resource.

## Information Session

### *Simmons/UNE Partnership Program In Primary Health Care Nursing*

RNs seeking a master's degree, nurse practitioners with a bachelor's degree, and master's prepared nurses seeking NP certification: attend an Information Session Thursday, November 18 to learn about the Simmons/UNE Partnership Program in Primary Health Care Nursing. UNE Portland campus, Room 104, Blewett Nursing Building 1600 – 1800 hours.

The program provides students with the opportunity to pursue their degree with a clinical focus on Adult, Family or Pediatric areas in one full day per week on the Portland campus. We provide first-rate faculty from both Simmons and UNE and are fully accredited by the National League of Nursing. To reserve a place, please contact Carole Moor by calling 797-7688, x4309, or by e-mail at [cmoor@mailbox.une.edu](mailto:cmoor@mailbox.une.edu).

*Free Lecture Series sponsored by the  
MaineHealth Learning Resource  
Centers as part of the Women's Health  
Program. Coming up next in the series:*

### **Urinary Incontinence in Women**

You are not alone... Many women of all ages have bladder control problems, yet are too embarrassed or ashamed to talk with their healthcare providers. Join Mary Brandes, MD, obstetrician and gynecologist, to learn about the latest advances into the cause and treatment of incontinence. You will leave with better understanding and the confidence to talk with your healthcare provider.

**Wednesday, November 10,  
1830 hours, Dana Center  
Auditorium**

*FREE but reservations preferred.  
FMI or to register,  
please call 885-8570.*

## FRESH START

*free*  
**Six-week Stop Smoking Group**

**Mondays,  
November 1-December 6  
1700-1800 hours  
Pulmonary Conf. Room #2  
P4A, MMC**

**To register or FMI,  
call 871-2662  
*You can still join!***

***The Great American  
Smokeout is November 18***



# Marketplace

In order to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to use the Marketplace, ads may be placed *once only*. Repeats will be permitted only on a space-available basis.

## FOR SALE

Maternity clothes valued at over \$120. 6 items. Most from JC Penney. Sizes Med - Lrg (8 - 12). Casual & dressy, fall & winter season. 2 Jumpers, 2 dresses, 2 shirts. Asking \$25 for all. Call 767-8086.

TV console, metal twin size bed frame, high chair, 2 car seats, stroller, Child's pink vanity set w/ chair. Free washing machine and dryer. Call for prices and details 839-6304.

Westinghouse washer/dryer, 3 YO, \$400; Futon: metal, black, brand new, \$140. Call 797-7394.

Snowboard: brand new, still in wrapper. Nale (Elan) Spike model, 156 cm, \$250 or BO. Call 871-2088.

Telephone: cordless Panasonic, digital answering 2 mailboxes, more, brand new, \$60; Lens: Phoenix 28 - 300 mm for all 35 mm cameras, brand new, \$150; Lens: Tamron 28 - 200 mm, brand new, \$300; Flesh lamp Achiver 250, 6 mo. old, \$100; VCR camera: Nikon 8 mm, 2 YO, \$150; Nikon camera N70, brand

new, \$300; kid's radios, range up to 2 miles, 6 mo. old, \$10 each. Call 878-2361 after 2000 hours.

1992 Ford Explorer 4 WD, 2 dr, 5 spd, AM/FM/CD, 128K mi., runs/looks good, original owner, well maintained, snow tires w/rims. \$5,500. Call 871-2066 or 926-5063.

1994 88 Oldsmobile. 123K mi., new brakes, sticker. Asking \$5,000 or BO. Call 675-3178.

Moving Sale. Contemporary dining room set w/beautiful china cabinet, pedestal table w/six chairs, custom pads and two leaves. Also, queen size soft sider water bed w/black and brass headboard and footboard, queen sofa bed w/matching chair and ottoman. All negotiable. Call 767-0806.

1991 Subaru Loyale. Red wagon, a/c, 5 spd, 144K miles, good condition, one owner. \$2,200 or BO. Call 846-9044.

1987 Ford Tempo 4 dr. Engine, exhaust, brakes replaced this year. Needs rust repair for inspection. \$500 or BO. Call 839-2948.

1997 Toyota 4-runner 4x4 SR5, dark green w/runners, lrg tire package, auto transmission, PS, PB, PW, PL, cruise, a/c, sunroof, nice condition, 44K miles. \$23,000. Call 729-1981.

MacIIcx w/13" monitor, 2x CDROM drive, keyboard, trackball, mouse. Also a Mac LCII w/13" monitor, 2x CDROM drive, keyboard, trackball. Also: Bell speakers, B/W stylewriter, Iomega Zip-Drive, and some programming books and disks. All for \$425 or BO. Call 772-6497.

1992 Cadillac sedan, dark blue, vinyl roof, leather interior, loaded, all new tires, never missed service appts., 66K miles. Excellent condition. Call 725-7357.

Century infant swing, \$15, and Evenflo exersaucer, \$25. Very good condition. Call 871-4407.

The deadlines for announcement-length items and **MARKETPLACE** are

Nov. 10 for the Nov. 24 issue

and

Nov. 24 for the Dec. 8 issue

*All items must be in writing*

and may be sent by

interoffice mail to the Public Information Department, by e-mail to FILIPL, or by fax to 871-6212.

## FOR RENT

Historic West End house. Furnished rooms 2 1/2 BA, common K, DR, LR. Cleaning service. No pets, no smoking, no lease. \$415/mo. incl. utils. Call 775-9012.

Windham: Furnished, 2,800 SF condo, 4 BR, 4 BA on Sebago Lake. All gas appliances & heat, A/C. Lots of extras. Ideal for professional couple. Call for details. \$1,400/mo. + util. Call 846-3782, leave msg.

Yarmouth: Unique, cozy oceanfront 2 BR in-law apt. All gas appliances & heat. Ideal for 1-2 professionals. Lots of extras. Call for details. \$1,000/mo. + util. Call 846-3782, leave msg.

Sunny spacious 3 BR. Quiet Woodfords area. Owner-occupied house. Hdwd flrs, fireplace, garage, lease. \$750/mo. + utils. Call 780-4602.

South Portland, Willard Beach area. 2+ BR, Victorian home, rooftop deck overlooks Casco Bay. \$1,200/mo. + utilities. Call 799-1481.

## CHILD CARE

Stay-at-home mom seeks creative, intelligent person to help with care of 2 YO and 5 YO. Own transportation, non-smoker. Call 781-7325.

## WANTED

Sewing machine in good working condition. Please call 767-6575 after 5:30 p.m.

### Employee Activity Committee Christmas Bus Trip

Saturday, November 27

Leaves MMC at 0800 hours

Leaves Boston at 1800 hours

\$16 per  
person  
For  
reservations,  
call 871-6018





# What's Happening?

## at Maine Medical Center

- All month** **Healthviews.** Comm. TV Network TV 4, Thursdays, 1400 and 2000 hours; Fridays, 0700 hours.
- Nov. 7** Interfaith End-of-Life Symposium. 1330-1630 hours. Temple Beth El, Portland. Call 871-2951.
- Nov. 8** MMC Epilepsy Support Group, Dana #9, 1900--2030 hours. FMI call Debbi, 800-660-7832.
- Nov. 11** Veteran's Day
- Nov. 13** Free prostate cancer screening. Brighton Surgical Center, 0900-1300 hours.  
*See p.2*
- Nov. 20** Annual Enrollment forms due to Human Resources.
- Nov. 25** Thanksgiving Day

## Who's going to a Celtics Game?

Emmy Hunt, RN, Outpatient Department, won four tickets in the drawing during National Pharmacy Week. Enjoy the game!

## NEW EMPLOYEES

**CENTRAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT:** Ralph Kent

**ENGINEERING:** Jeffrey Nobert

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES:** Gebreslasier Alghanesh, Andrea Boyle, Melissa Brooks, Jeffrey Splude, Nancy Hoeflick, Erin Plummer, Shawna Pomakis

**FOOD SERVICES:** Isreal Bekele, Kimberly Bowie, Askalu Ezra, Kelly Mack, Yekaterina Stikina, Mercedes Wescott, Jason Whiteley, Baron Aldrich, Emma Sabina, Aleksey Yurkevich, Selam Gerzher-Alemayo

**INVENTORY/DISTRIBUTION:** Mohammard Ali Khansari Nejad

**LINEN SERVICES:** Sam Im

**NURSING:** Marie Ahkao, Patricia Briggs, Sheri Wilson, Stacey Black, Hikki Haley, Melissa Hatch, Elizabeth Piper,

**OPERATING ROOM:** David Beam

**PULMONARY MEDICINE:**

Janine Martin

**RADIATION THERAPY:** Cheryl Tibbetts

**RESEARCH:** Evie Marcolini

**SECURITY:** David Hilton

**SOCIAL WORK:** James Harris, Jr.

For a listing of

MaineHealth classes in the  
*Healthy Children & Family*

*Series,*



call 781-1730.

## About People

• **Paul Stern, MD**, Chief, Department of Pediatrics, has been appointed to the Council on Education of the National Association of Children's Hospitals and Related Institutions.

• At the annual meeting of the New England Surgical Society, held in September, **Reed Quinn, MD**, Director, Congenital Heart Surgery, was inducted as a new member. **Brad Cushing, MD**, Director, Division of Trauma, and **Ronald Martin, MD**, were elected to membership to be inducted next year. **Albert Dibbins, MD**, Associate Chief, Department of Surgery, and Director, General Surgical Residency Program, served as Chairman of the meeting Program Committee. He is a former Vice President of the Society. **Jeremy Morton, MD**, Director, Division of Thoracic and Cardiac Surgery, concluded his six-year term as Maine representative to the Society's Executive Council.

*What's Happening* is published every other week at Maine Medical Center for members of the hospital community and for friends of the institution throughout Maine and northern New England. Comments, questions, and suggestions may be addressed to the Office of Public Information, MMC, 22 Bramhall Street, Portland, Maine 04102-3175. (207) 871-2196. Editor: Wayne L. Clark.

☐ Change name or address as shown on address label.

☐ Remove my name from your *What's Happening?* mailing list.

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# What's Happening?

MAINE MEDICAL CENTER 22 BRAMHALL STREET PORTLAND, ME 04102-3175